

Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

# District 3 Slate

March 2009

Third District, County of San Diego

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Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (above left) listens along with Supervisors Bill Horn and Greg Cox as Supervisors from throughout the state discuss the latest developments in the state's fiscal crisis. The meeting (below) included elected officials, supervisors from three other counties. Supervisors joined in a lawsuit to force the state to pay for mandated programs.



## Slater-Price: State Needs Fiscal Balance

Sending a message in person to stress its importance, Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price was joined by her colleagues from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to oppose the Legislature's effort to close California's \$42 billion budget deficit by seizing tax revenue from county and municipal governments, leaving counties to fend for themselves. State officials had frozen reimbursements for services provided by the County of San Diego as mandated by the Legislature, including CalWORKS recipients, foster care and other social services.

"This was a time for action, to make sure our state lawmakers clearly realized how they are impacting the residents they, too, serve," explained Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price.

"This Board believes it is important that our voice is heard. We were joined by our colleagues representing Riverside, San Bernardino and Imperial counties. The County of San Diego had already drew upon its reserves to backfill the \$6 billion needed to pay for these services for March. There was no way we could afford to continue subsidizing the state's inability to handle its financial obligations."

Noting that the County of San Diego has built up a prudent "rainy day" reserve based on its conservative financial planning, Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price suggested it is time California embraced a sim-

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## County To Assist Homeowners Facing Foreclosure

Communities across San Diego County hit hard by the foreclosure crisis may soon see fewer "For Sale" signs. The county Department of Housing and Community Development recently received more than \$5.1 million from the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which was created as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act passed by Congress to help local and state agencies deal with the foreclosure crisis.

At least a quarter of the families assist-

ed must be at no more than 50 percent of the area median income (AMI) level, which is currently \$39,500 for a family of four. The remaining funds can be used to help families up to 120 percent of the AMI level, which is \$94,800 for a family of four.

The funds must be obligated within 18 months of receiving them and will be used for several projects:

- A homebuyer program that provides up to a \$50,000 low-interest loan to a family to buy a foreclosed home.

- A program for nonprofit agencies and developers that want to buy and rehabilitate foreclosed homes to operate as affordable rental properties for families at no more than 50 percent of the AMI level.

Buyers may also receive up to an additional \$12,500 to pay for energy efficiency and conservation projects.

For more information about affordable housing, visit the Housing and Community Development website at [www.sdhcd.org](http://www.sdhcd.org).

## AROUND AND ABOUT IN THE THIRD DISTRICT

### News of Note



#### Changes Promote Wind Power

An effort to determine the feasibility of using wind power to generate "clean" energy for San Diego County advanced when the Board of Supervisors revised regulations for the installation of monitoring towers. Previously, county regulations required a major-use permit that took up to months to issue and \$100,000 in cost per site just to test wind strength. The new policy relaxes the permitting requirements for test sites only, reducing the cost to between \$7,000 and \$10,000 and the time to three to six months.

#### Library Trees To Be Replaced

Efforts to save three diseased Torrey pines that shaded the Cardiff-by-the-Sea Library proved unsuccessfully, necessitating their removal to prevent injuries from falling limbs. The trees will be replaced by native landscaping funded by a Third District community grant.



#### Warning Issued for Ticks

Vector Control officials warn outdoor enthusiasts to be aware of ticks while enjoying activities in local parks and open spaces. Ticks are common in San Diego between November and April and can carry such diseases as Lyme and tularemia.

Ticks get tularemia by biting infected rodents, rabbits and other animals. Symptoms include lymph node swelling, headache and fever, skin ulcer at the site of the bite, fatigue, body aches and nausea. Lyme disease is a bacterial disease spread by the bite of a Western black-legged tick. It starts with a circular rash at the site of the tick bite. Flu-like symptoms and joint aches may follow. For more information on tick-borne diseases and prevention, visit [www.SDVector.com](http://www.SDVector.com).



### THINGS LOOKING UP AT LIBRARY...

A young patron watches as a stilt walker entertains the audience during the Feb. 28 birthday celebration of the Encinitas Library. The day's activities featured performances and events for families. The Encinitas Library reopened a year ago after undergoing a major renovation that included adopting environment-friendly building practices. Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price helped fund the expansion, which increased the library's original size by four times, allowing it to house more than 70,000 books and other media. She later awarded a \$254,000 community projects grant that funded the library's Literacy Information Center.

## Slater-Price Champions Effort to Qualify Families for Tax Credit

County residents are being advised to see if they qualify for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit. To ensure low-income families qualify for this credit, more than 600 volunteers at 80 sites are assisting to file income tax returns through April 15 as part of a joint effort teaming the county Health and Human Services Agency and the Countywide Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition.

"These are difficult economic times. I encourage low-income families to take advantage of this great service," advises Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price. "By filing an income tax return and claiming the money they have earned, they will not only help themselves, but also the local economy."

Established in 1975, the EITC is the federal government's largest cash assistance program designed to lift low-income families and individuals out of poverty by helping them keep more of their wages. However, the IRS estimates that upwards of 25 percent of eligible individuals do not claim the credit.

In 2003, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, at the urging of Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price, launched a pilot program to provide no-cost tax preparation assistance to low-income workers.

The program was expanded countywide the following year.

Since the initiative began, more than 52,000 state and federal returns have been filed, resulting in more than 23.5 million EITC dollars being returned to the regional economy.

Individuals and families who worked in 2008 and earned less than \$12,880 and \$41,646, respectively could qualify for as much as \$4,824 in tax credit. However, they must file a tax return to qualify for the EITC.

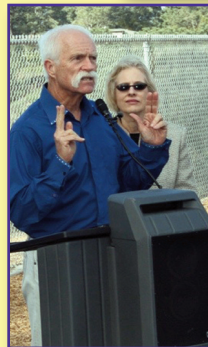
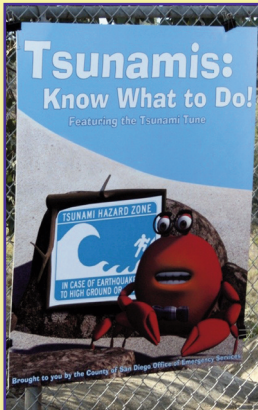
### Chicken Pox Outbreak

Parents are being advised to ensure their children are current with their vaccinations following an outbreak of chicken pox at a Christian school in Mira Mesa and other campus in San Marcos. Five students infected in Mira Mesa had a single dose of vaccine. Two doses are recommended to guard against contracting chicken pox, or lessen its effects.

None of the students required hospitalization. Chicken pox is a highly contagious disease caused by the varicella virus. en pox blisters. For more information on chicken pox and immunizations in general, call at (619) 692-8661 or visit [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org).



## AROUND AND ABOUT IN THE THIRD DISTRICT



### KNOWING WHAT TO DO...

Students at Del Mar Heights Elementary School (above) learn how to do the “tsunami slide” while watching “Tsunamis: Know What To Do.” The county Office of Emergency Services received a grant to create a six-minute educational video for children about tsunamis. Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (above left, with Principal Wendy Wardlow) spoke during a press conference at the school about the importance of educating children about tsunamis through this fun and non-threatening medium (middle left). SDSU geologist Pat Abbott (left) detailed how tsunamis occur and what to do when you are faced with this emergency.

### RED SKIES AT NIGHT...

Nearly 40 American Heart Association volunteers and supporters attended the Go Red for Women rally in the East Plaza of the County Administration Building on Feb. 5, the day before National Wear Red Day. Vice Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price (right) has supported the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women campaign for years. Many of her health initiatives encourage a healthier lifestyle by quitting smoking, eating right and exercising regularly — all aims of Go Red.



## AROUND THE THIRD DISTRICT

### BUDGET

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ilar strategy to resolve its fiscal problems.”

Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price acknowledged there is no such thing as a “perfect budget.”

“No matter what the local or national economy is doing, no matter how built up the reserves are, no matter how many services are provided, there will be those who believe government is not doing enough ... or too much,” she said. “This is the reality we face as elected officials. Making sound judgments is our responsibility. That is what is expected of us when we take the oath of office.

Vice-Chairwoman Slater-Price added she realizes that many factors go into creating a budget, be it for the County of San Diego or the State of California.

“However, we must demonstrate to taxpayers that we are being responsible in our planning and our accountability,” she said.

“You cannot spend more than you receive in revenue. I support a budget that is realistic in its assumptions and contains prudent reserves. If necessary, a spending limit should be embraced so that all interests realize there is only so much money in the pot.”



Several thousand people over the entire event checked out the newly opened Visitor's Center at the San Elijo Lagoon Preserve (left) that made its debut last month. The \$5.6 million center has seen a jump in visitors since it re-opened. Vice Chairwoman Slater-Price committed community project grant funds to help build the center.

## County Is Recognized, Saving Residents Money

**T**op scores have been awarded to the county Department of Planning and Land Use's Building Division for its building codes and enforcement system, showing that San Diego County homes are among the safest in the state, according to the Insurance Services Office's review.

The grades could also mean lower flood insurance rates for San Diego County homeowners and businesses. The federal government offers discounted flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program. As a participating community, the

County of San Diego can receive additional discounts because of the good grades.

The Building Division earned a “2” on a 1 to 10 grading scale for its residential codes. The ISO is an independent rating organization that serves the property/casualty insurance industry. The “2” grade put the county in the top 6 percent of 302 graded California agencies. No agency earned a “1” and San Diego was one of just 17 to earn a “2.” It received a “3” for its commercial building codes, ranking in the top 17 percent.

## The Staff of Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

- John Weil .....Chief of Staff
- Sachiko Kohatsu .....Land Use
- Mark Olson .....Budget & Finance
- Aaron Byzak .....Health & Human Services
- Erica Holloway .....Media
- Adam Kaye .....Community Services
- Anne-Marie Jewel .....Scheduling
- Frances Porter .....Receptionist
- Dennis C. Lhota .....Newsletter

Contact us at: (619) 531-5533  
(800) 852-7334

Write us at: 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335  
San Diego, CA 92101

Website: [www.pamslater.com](http://www.pamslater.com)

E-mail: [pam.slater@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:pam.slater@sdcounty.ca.gov)

E-Slate: [E-Slate\\_editor@roadrunner.com](mailto:E-Slate_editor@roadrunner.com)

County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price  
District Three  
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335  
San Diego, CA 92101  
[www.pamslater.com](http://www.pamslater.com)